4. Shri Jagdish Khattar, Member and

5 Shri D.K. Biswas, Convenor.

The tenure of the Authority has subsequently been extended till 28th January, 2003 and after demise of Shri Anil Agarwal, Ms. Sunita Narain has been made a member of the Authority.

The powers delegated to the Authority by the Government include issue of directions pertaining to standards for the quality of the environment, emission or discharge of pollutants, industrial areas, vehicular pollution, ambient noise standards, monitoring the action plan as contained in the 'White Paper on Pollution in Delhi with an Action Plan', powers of entry, inspection, search and seizure for protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution in the NCR under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

(b) and (c) The Authority, submitted progress reports periodically to the Government on its activities and functions for protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution in the NCR. Its latest progress report for the period August, 2001 to February, 2002 was received by the Government. The main recommendations of the Authority were implemented by the Government which include phasing out of leaded petrol, introduction of petrol with 1% benzene maximum, introduction of fuel (petrol as well as diesel) with 0.05% sulphur content maximum, sale of only pre-mixed 2-T Oil in petrol stations, ban on plying of Delhi city bus fleet more than eight years old except on clean fuels, conversion of Delhi city bus fleet to single fuel mode on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), increase of CNG supply outlets, adoption of more stringent emission norms known as Bharat Stage-11 norms akin to Euro-II norms for 4 wheeled vehicles and construction of common effluent treatment plants.

(d) Does not arise.

Forest area under Project Tiger

3372. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of forest areas which are being considered to be placed under the Project Tiger Scheme during 2002 and 2003, State-wise; and

(b) whether any areas from Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Goa,

Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Rajasthan, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh are being considered; if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The following proposals have been received for inclusion as new Tiger Reserve:—

(1) Satkosia Gorge &Baisipada Wildlife Sanctuary —988sqkms — Orissa

(2) Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary— 1580sqkms — Chhattisgarh

(3) Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary— 364sqkms — Maharashtra

(4) Wan, Ambabarwa, Namala Wildlife Sanctuary— 350sqkms — Maharashtra

In view of limited financial allocations, no decision has been taken to notify any new Tiger Reserve.

Unified authority for GM Crops

3373. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the frame-work for evaluation and approval of Genetically Modified Crops is based on rules framed way back in 1989, under the Environment Protection Act, which needs a relook, in view of the recent developments in molecular biotechnology; and

(b) whether GM evaluation process is protracted and cumbersome due to multiplicity of authorities like Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation and Genetic Engg. Approval Committee; if so, whether Government would create a unified regulatory authority?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The biosafety regulatory framework in India consists of the Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells, 1989 made by the Ministry of Environment and Forests under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and the guidelines issued by the Department of Biotechnology. The Government is following a policy of case by case approval of transgenic crops. Introduction of any new technology requires careful evaluation and long term sustainable benefits. Extensive Rules and guidelines have been made for evaluating the environmental and health safety aspects of genetically modified organisms. Any company involved in the use of genetic engineering techniques has to obtain the approval of the Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation